

Champagne and a salute from fans for Lee's brave men

WYCOMBE WANDERERS heroically held joint First Division leaders Middlesbrough until the last minute of this remarkable replay.

They almost earned extra time—and certainly earned probably the greatest ovation ever given to a beaten side at Ayresome Park.

The 30,000 crowd chanted 'Wycombe . . . Wycombe . . . over and over again at the end and demanded and received a salute from the Isthmian League men.

After his men had held Middlesbrough on Saturday at Wycombe manager Brian Lee forecast: 'They'll murder us up there.'

But Wycombe came agonisingly close to repeating that feat last night with professional-like organisation and skill.

Character

Middlesbrough were preparing for another half-hour's slog when David Armstrong at last achieved the breakthrough.

Graeme Souness provided the pass and Armstrong's left foot put the ball past John Maskell, who had previously looked unbeatable.

Afterwards Lee, sipping the champagne given to his team by Middlesbrough, said: 'They can repay us by going all the way to the final. They have sufficient character to do it.'

'We did ourselves justice and I was proud of our per-



Middlesbrough 1
Wycombe Wanderers 0

BY DOUG WEATHERALL

formance. Once again Middlesbrough didn't show what they are really capable of. I am sure they will do much better against Sunderland.

'The ovation we received from the crowd was heart warming.

Middlesbrough manager Jack Charlton said: 'I'm glad it's all over. It was astonishing that the Wycombe defence never lost control.

Middlesbrough chairman Charles Amen said: 'Thank goodness Wycombe are not in the First Division. They go forward whenever possible and they provided tonight one of the finest games I have ever seen from an amateur side.'

All the pressure and ingenuity in varying attacks that Middlesbrough could muster failed to rattle the composure of a remarkably cool Wycombe defence.

First-time

And two shots from Howard Kennedy showed Wycombe were not just there to defend.

His first, a free-kick, was blocked. The next a 25-yarder, forced Jim Platt to dive to his right to save.

Wycombe goalkeeper Maskell had his first real save.

to make in the 25th minute when Souness volleyed left-footed.

But Platt had to make another good save when Steve Perrin smashed a first-time shot after the best one-touch move of the game which swept across the field from left to right.

In Middlesbrough's desperate late surge Alan Willey hit the post for the second time before Armstrong finally crushed Wycombe's memorable blockade.

WYCOMBE GO OUT BRAVELY

By COLIN DIBALL
Middlesbrough . . . 1
Wycombe 0

THE wonderfully big-hearted Wanderers from Wycombe came so close to a magnificent Soccer achievement last night.

All the glory belonged to the non-Leaguers as they held joint First Division leaders Middlesbrough for 179 minutes of a nail-biting third-round FA Cup tie.

The agony was that

they should fall in the dying moments of this replay when a frustrated 30,000 crowd seemed resigned to extra time.

The defence that had held up so magnificently under the careful management of skipper Alan Phillips finally cracked

with the seconds ticking away. Boro's Under-23 international David Armstrong gleefully collected a through pass from Graeme Souness and slotted the ball under advancing goalkeeper John Maskell.

Maskell made inspired saves to keep his side in the hunt.

Boro manager Jack Charlton said: 'Wycombe were tremendous. They have two or three players who would grace any team.'

Boro hail Wycombe braves

By BOB CASS
Boro 1, Wycombe 0

THE MIDDLESBROUGH supporters who came to conquer

stayed to cheer gallant amateurs Wycombe.

The Isthmian League side came within a minute of taking the joint First Division leaders into extra time.

Then Lady Luck, who had smiled on them for 89 nail-biting minutes, suddenly turned and kicked them in the teeth.

Boro's England Under-23 midfielder player David Armstrong pounced on it to a through

ball from Graeme Souness to guide the ball past Wycombe keeper John Maskell.

It gave the non-leaguers little opportunity to reply but their consolation for a glorious exit was a standing ovation from the crowd and a guard of honour from relieved Boro.

Boro boss Jack Charlton, grateful for the opportunity of taking Wycombe away from their sloping pitch on to the spacious billiard-table surface of Ayresome Park, had predicted annihilation.

Afterwards Charlton said: 'I'm glad it's all over. Wycombe are a good side and they gave us more problems than I imagined.'

Wanderers' proud coach Brian Lee said:

'I was delighted with the fight and effort shown by my players. We came so close to causing another shock. What Boro can do to repay us is by going all the way to Wembley. They have enough character to do it.'